

MEETING RECORD
(See also attachment: Parks & Rec. Presentation on Lincoln Mall)

NAME OF GROUP: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, December 20, 2001, 8:00 a.m., Legislative Hearing Room 1510, State Capitol Building, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Members: V.J. Nelson, David Hunter, Jeff Searcy, Pat O'Donnell, Tom Laging

Others: Bob Ripley (Capitol Environs Staff), Ken Fougeron (DAS State Building Division), Eileen Bergt (UNL Landscape Services), George Haecker (Capitol Commission), Jerry Shorney, JJ Yost, Mark Canney, and Lynn Johnson (Parks & Recreation), Ed Zimmer and Missy Minner (Planning Dept.)

STATED PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

Approval of the meeting notes of November 7, 2001 -

O'Donnell moved approval of the minutes as distributed, seconded by Nelson. Motion for approval carried 5-0; Nelson, Hunter, Laging, O'Donnell, and Searcy voting 'yes'; Kilgarin and Todd absent.

Design concepts for Centennial Mall -

Laging explained that the comments and community priorities discussed at the charette have been incorporated into the concept. He added that while this is not the greatest time to bring a large project forward, the Mayor has indicated that he wants it on his agenda as an important thing to move forward in the event that Omaha brings something forward.

This is a conceptual level plan which is being framed as a health and safety issue. From that standpoint, the Mall is ready to be condemned. The basic issues include:

- ! building and safety
- ! loss of parking
- ! maintaining the existing street circulation
- ! constructability in stages
- ! working within the community's economic priorities
- ! equitably share costs and benefits
- ! repair and maintenance by Parks
- ! developing a degree of continuity with existing designs

The plan encompasses a seven block zone and calls for a grassy Mall with a double row of large vertical trees and a combination of double and single sidewalks. Memorials would happen along the wall that serves as a barrier between church/school and alley. This wall can be extended over time as more memorials are added. A fountain is anticipated in the center.

The Journalism College is an example of an opportunity for private donations. Hunter suggested that “non-Lincoln” people and groups such as the World Herald be included to make this more of a “state” project rather than a “Lincoln” project.

Laging estimated that the middle 3 blocks between M & P would be slightly more expensive than the O Street project. He suggested that this concept would cost ½ to 1/3 of what the previous Mall plan was. The Mayor, State, and DLA have all indicated their approval with this concept.

Hunter suggested that Allen Beerman be approached about the Journalism School block. He felt that he could be helpful in raising funds for that portion.

Zimmer added that the UpDowntowners are very interested in having a festival location in this vicinity. The opportunity for that stage area is built into this concept. Additionally, Pershing has an interest in sponsoring a public showing of the design if it receives the Commission’s blessing.

Laging estimated that the concept could be built for about \$1 million per block. He is working to obtain more concrete numbers. Public Works has indicated some concerns with the medians. They are worried about traffic disruption with people backing out of the parking stalls. Laging stated that he measured the street between the Lied and the Howell Theater. The Mall concept has more dimension than that does.

Nelson asked about the concerns expressed with snow removal. Laging indicated that there is enough radius for snow equipment and that the medians could hold the dumped snow. Zimmer stated that this concept includes the element of a center median which is one that people like, the alley serves some uses, people will be able to use the street but it will not be a major thoroughfare, and it keeps the parking which was important to DLA.

Laging suggested that the first 3 blocks in the middle would go forward as a street improvement project. The second phase would be the University side because that is a low figure. The State end would be the third phase. Hunter stated that this is affordable when it is divided into sections. Zimmer suggested that whoever comes in first begin the improvements, rather than setting an order.

Johnson indicated that the Mayor is sponsoring 5 community/business breakfast meetings. The Centennial Mall concept is one of the projects that has been presented at those breakfast meetings.

O’Donnell wanted to know who is facilitating the fund raising for the private sector. Laging indicated that remains to be determined. He has some grant money budgeted to get that moving. The approach is to get political backing, design, and fund raising in place.

Johnson stated that according to the Mayor, the City anticipates taking a leadership role with this. They are hoping that the breakfasts will help to form a committee to try to raise funds. O’Donnell stated that there would be a much better chance of approval by the Appropriations Committee if it is approached at

the right time by an effort led by businesses and the community than if it is approached by the City.

Hunter pointed out that DLA was a big obstacle with the last plan, they are on board with this one, so that obstacle has been removed.

Hunter suggested that costs be pulled together by February, with a funding report in place by April. Then it would be appropriate to talk about public hearings, even without contract documents.

O'Donnell moved support of the concept and requested a report on the cost at the February meeting, seconded by Hunter. Motion for approval carried 5-0; Nelson, Hunter, Laging, O'Donnell, and Searcy voting 'yes'; Kilgarin and Todd absent.

Design concepts for Lincoln Mall -

Mark Canney gave a presentation (a copy of which is attached and incorporated herein) outlining the three concepts for consideration for the Mall.

Hunter asked about the status of the TIF. Johnson indicated that he would check on that and report back at the next meeting. Hunter stated that he believes the TIF could provide the financing for the project and that the private sector would pay for the maintenance of it.

The Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission meeting recessed at 9:00 a.m. and reconvened at the joint meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Commission and the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission.